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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 16 | Humidity 60% Clear with periodic clouds Sensex 71,106 | Nifty 21,349 | Gold 62,972 | Silver 75,448 | Dollar 83.17 | Euro 91.71 | GBP 105.62

Plant saplings abandoned at BBMP headquarters for over 2 years at designated spots, citizens urge civic body

GREEN DAZE

Some plants already grown to 8 ft in height

| Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), especially the horticulture and forest wings of the civic body, are to be role models for citizens of Bengaluru for ensuring a greener tomorrow through better management of the city's green cover that include saplings and trees.

The authorities are mandated to create awareness among the public about the importance of trees in the environment. That said, it is quite intriguing why the BBMP authorities themselves have abandoned around 60 well-grown saplings on the civic body's head office premises.

The sight of abandoned saplings at one of the corners of the BBMP headquarters is indeed a grim one for the taxpayers and environmentalists because these saplings were brought from nurseries maintained by the BBMP with the taxpayers' money.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"I want the BBMP to recover the expenses of saplings from the salary of the BBMP officer responsible for abandoning them

— Dr AN Yellappa Reddy, environmentalist

Trial by trials

'By end of 2022, Bengaluru's courts were grappling with a backlog of over 80,000 pending trials'

| Ahna Prakash
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Bengaluru's courts are facing a challenge in wrapping up trials, grappling with a substantial backlog of cases that have lingered for years. Legal experts attributed the issue to vacancies within the judiciary.

As per the data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), by the end of 2022, Bengaluru's courts grappled with an alarming backlog of more than 80,000 cases that were pending trials. The pendency percentage in Bengaluru courts soared to 84.9%.

Simultaneously, the city's police were burdened with over 10,000 pending investigations in SLL crimes and 9,820 cases for IPC crimes, marking a 32.4% pendency in SLL crimes and 27.3% in IPC crimes.

Statewide, Karnataka courts faced a staggering 455,294 pending matters in IPC crimes, registering an 84.2% pendency rate, while the conviction rate stood at 38.4%.

In Bengaluru alone, the backlog from 2021 surged to 80,146 cases, escalating to 83,000 pending trials by the end of 2022, particularly in IPC crimes. Furthermore, in SLL crimes, Bengaluru witnessed 26,024 cases awaiting trial in the courts, with a pendency percentage of 78.3%.

Advocate Supriya Mehta told BM that the major reason behind this is the vacancies in the court.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Clay creations

Unleash your creativity at the Pottery Workshop, an engaging and hands-on experience that promises to mould your imagination into beautiful, tangible art.
Where: Lahe Lahe, Koramangala
When: December 26-31

02 Board game bonanza

Embark on a journey of strategic fun at "Church Street Gaming" hosted by The Boardgame Den. Whether you're a seasoned board gamer or new to the tabletop world, this event promises an evening of laughter, competition, and thrilling game play.
Where: The Boardgame Den, Church Street
When: December 30 - January 27

03 Mandala magic

Immerse yourself in the world of artistry at the "Dot Mandala on Wood" workshop, a unique and therapeutic experience. Discover the beauty of dot mandala painting on wood, combining precision and creativity for a truly enchanting masterpiece.
Where: December 30 - April 27, 2024
Where: Art Beat, HSR Layout

Christmas Cheer

Hundreds of people gathered at St Mary's Basilica in Shivajinagar to celebrate Christmas. The festive spirit filled the air, creating a heartwarming scene of shared happiness and communal cheer.

PIC: KAUSHIK JN

Collective effort of compassion and relief from B'luru to Tuticorin

Amidst flood devastation, residents of Bengaluru unite with various NGOs to bring essential supplies to stranded Tuticorin families

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A group of volunteers from Bengaluru rallied together to aid the flood-affected residents of Tuticorin district in Tamil Nadu. The floods, which reached alarming levels of 3-5 feet, left many stranded, homes submerged, and vital infrastructure damaged.

Rescue operations were initiated promptly, but the sheer magnitude of the disaster overwhelmed the local resources. Reports indicated that numerous individuals were stuck in their homes as floodwaters breached their residences, necessitating urgent assistance. Government relief efforts were underway, yet some areas reported a lack of essential supplies.

Amidst this, volunteers from Bengaluru decided to collect relief materials and take them to the flood-affected location. A resident of Bengaluru, working here and originally hailing from Tuticorin, highlighted the situation in his hometown to other volunteers. They then immediately decided to come forward and help the people in Tuticorin. The volunteers spread messages about the collection of relief materials last week on Wednesday, and within a day, many NGOs came forward to donate a large number of relief materials.

Volunteers providing essential items such as food, clothes, night suits, biscuits, and water to those affected by the flood

> **"Our goal was to reach those places that might have been overlooked. We wanted to make a direct impact**
>
> –Tauseef Ahmed, Volunteer

The volunteers collected 2,500 litres of water bottles, 4,000 biscuit packets, 420 litres of milk, 650 kg of rice, 120 litres of oil, and 500-plus pairs of clothes. Blankets, ration kits, and boxes of cakes were sent.

Volunteers Tauseef Ahmed, Mohammed Saif, Sameer Barde, and Mohammed Mehraj joined together for the initiative and took the relief materials to Tuticorin on Friday.

Tauseef stated, "Upon learning about the situation in Tuticorin, we knew we had to act. We contacted the locals and identified their immediate needs – clothes, night suits, biscuits, water bottles, and milk for men, women, and children. The Active Bengaluru group collaborated with local NGOs, combining their efforts to ensure a comprehensive response. They focused on logistics, while the volunteers gathered relief materials. It was a collective effort."

Tuticorin is predominantly an agricultural region with extensive banana and paddy fields, where many farmers have lost their livelihood. It faced additional challenges with the collapse of a crucial bridge that compounded the difficulties for both residents and rescuers. However, now the situation is under control, and the government has started carrying out work to fix multiple issues. Now that the floodwaters have receded, residents are slowly returning to their homes.

As the team from Bengaluru arrived, they targeted the most affected areas where relief had been scarce. "Our goal was to reach those places that might have been overlooked. We wanted to make a direct impact," Tauseef shared.

They disclosed that if need be, they will be sending in more materials in the coming days to help many citizens in Tuticorin. Organisations like Milli Council, Palm Charitable Trust, Project Smile, Beyond Boundaries, Be Charitable, and others came forward and supported the initiative by Active Bangalore."

FADING VAJRA

BMTC slashes down number of Volvo buses to 474 from previous 767

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The number of Vajra (Volvo) buses have been slashed to 61% of its capacity in the face of mounting losses to the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC). During its peak, 767 Vajra buses used to ply the roads. Now the number has dwindled to 474.

Before the onset of covid in March 2020, there were 169 buses from the Majestic depot, which has now been scaled down to 134. Volvo buses from the Kathriguppe depot have reduced from 176 to 121; ITPL depot from 59 to 52; HSR Layout depot from 150 to 101; Hebbal depot from 150 to 101; Hebbal depot from 144 to 52, and KR Puram from 69 to 54.

An official said, "We have implemented these measures to curb losses. In 2018-19, a few Volvo buses were transferred to the sister concern KSRTC. Subsequently, Vajra services were temporarily halted or reduced during the covid years. Although we aim to offer the best luxury transport service, we are not witnessing the anticipated demand. Thus, to minimise losses, we've cut down Volvo bus service routes from 117 in 2020 to just 54 routes now."

Tech corridor serive

Vajra bus services were once a major attraction in the tech corridor, especially on routes like Whitefield-ITPL, Electronics City, and Outer Ring Road. However, increased traffic has prompted commuters to shift to personal vehicles or carpooling. Furthermore, the operational Metro route to Whitefield and the upcoming Electronics City Metro in 2024, as well as the Outer Ring Road Metro in 2026, are expected to divert more passengers towards trains. Officials note that Vajra services were costly as they consumed more diesel, with mileage at just 2 km compared to 3.5 to 4.5 km for ordinary BMTC buses.

While Vayu Vajra services generated a revenue of Rs 70.90 per km, other Vajra services within the city earned only Rs 54 per km. Even Vayu Vajra services are operating at a loss, as BMTC requires at least Rs 80 per km to maintain these buses, considering the high servicing and auto parts costs. The number of buses on the road has also decreased, dropping from 767 in 2020 to 644 and further to 474. Consequently, daily trips have also dwindled from 3,151 in March 2020 to 2,241 by December 2023.

Hit in the airport

While intra-city demand for Vajra services has declined, the demand for airport services has surged. In 2020, there were 123 Vayu Vajra services to Kempegowda International Airport, which has now increased to 132, with calls for deploying more services on the rise. Consequently, Vayu Vajra trips have risen from 793 a day in March 2020 to 912 a day now.

Electric is in

An official added, "Following unsuccessful trials with Volvo and Marco Polo AC buses, BMTC is now set to introduce AC electric buses. According to the official, the city has shown a preference for non-AC electric buses, and they have gained popularity among commuters seeking green energy transportation. "Consequently, we are exploring the introduction of AC electric buses, with plans to deploy 320 such buses on a gross contract carriage basis."

The BMTC will be deploying 100 electric buses (12-metre-long) from Tuesday. This will be part of the overall 921 electric buses to be brought to the road by next year. Interestingly, the BMTC officials claim that the latest electric buses are more energy efficient as they have a range of 200 km with full charge as against the current set of electric buses which provide 140 km range.

Cricketer goes to cops against threatening girlfriend

A 29-year-old cricketer has filed a police report against his former girlfriend, stating that she tried to end his career. According to the lawsuit, she also allegedly threatened his family members, especially his father, mother, and elder brother, of terrible repercussions. This comes about a year after the woman filed a complaint against him.

KC Cariappa, a resident of Nagasandra's Ramaiah Layout, who is originally from Kodagu native, reported to Bagalagunte police on Friday that he had befriended the girl, 24, of Kodagu. He stated that they quickly fell in love, but he ended their relationship because she was a drug addict.

Previously, on December 31, 2022, the girl had filed a complaint against Cariappa with the Bagalagunte police, stating that he had forced her to take an abortion pill after getting her pregnant. **BMB**

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Bengaluru's water bodies are gasping for oxygen

Over 10% of water bodies in the city in critical state as dissolved oxygen plummets to an all time low, total coliform reaches unprecedented levels

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177 lakes in the city suffer anoxic conditions, lacking oxygen as recorded in November

The water quality analysis of 117 lakes in Bengaluru reveals that over 10 per cent of the water bodies are anoxic. According to the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board's (KSPCB) analysis report, 12 lakes, namely - Madiwala, Herohalli, Karihobanahalli, Dasarahalli, Varthur, Uttarahalli Doraikere, River Dakshina Pinakini near Mugalur, Devarabeesanahalli, Rampura, Kammasandra, Chandapura, Hosakerehalli - recorded 'below detection level' oxygen concentration in November.

In October, six lakes recorded anoxic conditions, and in September, five water bodies had oxygen below detection level.

While dissolved oxygen (DO) was found to be below 0.3 mg/l (below detection level), these water bodies also had astonishingly high levels of pathogen-based contamination (total and faecal coliform bacteria). As per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), a waterbody that can be used as a drinking water source after conventional treatment and disinfection should have a total coliform organism level at 5,000 MPN/100ml, a DO value of 4 mg/l or more, and BOD of 3 mg/l or less. However, in some of these lakes, the total coliform (TC) level was as high as 2,30,00,000 MPN/100ml.

> **Decaying organic matter is one of the most important reasons leading to low oxygen concentration in lakes** –City-based lake activist

Moreover, none of the 117 water bodies had all water quality parameters meeting desirable levels.

City-based lake activists say poor oxygen concentration harms aquatic life, and measures should be taken to improve dissolved oxygen levels in water bodies.

"Decaying organic matter is one of the most important reasons leading to low oxygen concentration in lakes. However, other factors such as increased water temperature may also impact oxygen holding capacity. Keeping these aspects in mind, the board must contemplate sharing other vital information such as the time of sampling and temperature of the samples in the public domain. Information regarding sampling locations is vital too. KSPCB must consider including these pieces of information in the report to better understand reasons and remedial measures," said a city-based lake activist.

KSPCB has been generating monthly water quality reports of selected water bodies based on 25 parameters such as DO, Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), phosphate, nitrate, TC, etc., to be put in the public domain.

'Take nurseries elsewhere, this is lake land'

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Forest Department has prepared a plan for establishing a nursery at Dasarahalli Lake at an estimated cost of Rs 2 crore. While the Forest Department defends its move stating that it would not only enable saplings but also prevent encroachment of lake land, some of the environmentalists want the BBMP Forest Department to utilise civic amenities (CA) sites at newly formed layouts for establishing nurseries.

The Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) floated a short-term tender on December 20 inviting bidders for the development of infrastructure for newly located nurseries at Dasarahalli Lake. The other works are the construction of a pathway, culvert and miscellaneous works including digging a borewell, providing a submersible pump set and pipeline, and construction of office and security rooms at an estimated cost of Rs 1 crore. The other work is the construction of a compound wall with grill works, construction of an overhead tank with 50,000 litres capacity and a store room at an estimated cost of Rs 1 crore.

Meanwhile, environmentalists are up in arms against the proposal of having a nursery and other facilities on the lake land. "It is nothing but encroaching on the lake's land. It will affect the water-holding capacity of the lake. Instead of using the lake land for establishing a nursery, the authorities concerned should have approached the Bangalore Development Authority to reserve civic amenities sites for establishing nurseries at the layouts. Many CA sites are allotted to private educational institutions that are exploiting the public by collecting huge amounts of money as a school fee," said Ramprasad V, co-founder of Friends of Lakes.

Expressing a similar opinion, Vijay Nishanth, also known as a 'tree doctor' said that the authorities should not allow the use of lake land for other purposes. "Establishing nurseries will affect biodiversity. The lake land is not meant for that. It will be better if the BBMP authorities shift the proposed nursery to another suitable location. Using lake land for other purposes will be against the court's directive," said Nishanth.

However, BBMP Deputy Conservator of Forests BLG Swamy said that the proposed nursery at Dasarahalli Lake will not affect the water-holding capacity of the lake. "It will prevent the encroachment of the lake land by others. We are not putting up permanent structures on the lake land. We will also not use water from the lake for watering saplings at the nursery," said the DCF.

Bangalore Mirror published a story - Chelas think MLA stands for 'My Leader's Area' - on September 3, 2020, narrating how some goons working with the then MLA managed to do Ganesha immersion in Chokkasandra Lake, also known as Dasarahalli Lake, despite a ban on immersions of idols made of Plaster of Paris. The BM again published a story - BM Impact: Ganesha idol bids adieu to immersion lake, finally - on September 5, 2020, explaining how the maintenance staff removed a Ganesha idol that was dumped by the then Dasarahalli MLA R Manjunatha's supporters.

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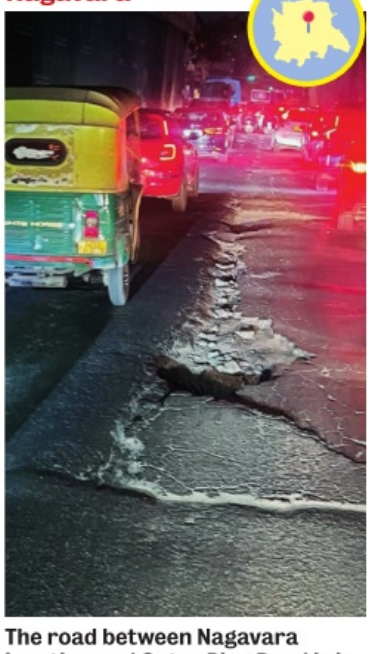
Dangling wires
Nandini Layout

Another BESCOM Junction Box with an open door and haphazard cables poses a potential hazard at the Nandini Layout Bus Stand.

Levelling lapse
Nandini Layout

BWSSB staff fail to properly fill and level the road after digging for repairs. This issue is particularly dangerous for two-wheeler riders at Jai Maruthi Nagar Circle.

Road worsens
Nagavara



The road between Nagavara junction and Outer Ring Road is in very bad shape.

Childhood, lost

No stop to child marriages as despite efforts and awareness campaigns, 7 instances still reported in city this year

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Closure of schools during covid and lockdowns that enabled marriages to go on evading scrutiny said to have contributed to spike in child marriages

In the progressive city of Bengaluru, the issue of child marriage continues despite concerted efforts and awareness campaigns. The city reported seven cases of child marriages in the fiscal year 2022-23, adding to the overall tally of 328 reported child marriages in Karnataka during the same period.

In the preceding years, Bengaluru recorded eight child marriages in 2020-21 and 13 in 2021-22.

Karnataka has earned the unfortunate title of being the 'child marriage capital of India,' with the highest reported cases in the country in 2021, reaching 273 instances. Notably, Karnataka is the sole state to surpass the 200-mark in child marriages, surpassing the second-highest reported cases in Tamil Nadu (169) and Assam (155).

A concerning trend is the doubling of child marriages in the state, rising from 111 in 2019 to 184 in 2020 and further escalating to 273 in 2021. Nationally, the figures increased from 523 in 2019 to 785 in 2020 and 1,050 in 2021.

Examining Bengaluru's statistics, the city saw 256 attempts at child marriages in the last five years.

Although officials and guardians thwarted 217 child marriages at the last minute, 39 child marriages were still solemnised during this period.

Disturbingly, the number of child marriages in the city increased from eight to 13 when comparing the years 2020-21. Karnataka, as a whole, has witnessed a staggering 10,352 child marriages in the past five years.

Covid effect

Officials attribute the rise in child marriages to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic.

The partial closure of schools resulted in children being out of school, and the absence of the school system, especially for girls, is considered a factor in aiding early marriages.

The lockdowns also led to many marriages being conducted within homes, evading official scrutiny and contributing to the surge in child marriages.

Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smriti Irani, highlighted the role of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006, which empowers State Governments to appoint Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO) responsible for preventing child marriages, collecting evidence, advising individuals against such practices, creating awareness, and sensitising communities.

Stunning fact about slaughterhouses

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KAUSHIK JN

There are two slaughterhouses in Bengaluru

In the absence of stunning facilities at the city's slaughterhouses, animal activists have once again demanded that authorities must take measures to ensure it is implemented. Stunning is a method of making an animal unconscious and insensible to pain prior to killing.

There are around 4,500 mutton stalls in the city and two slaughterhouses – at KR Market and at Tannery Road – where thousands of sheep and goats are slaughtered daily. On an average, 30,000 sheep and goats are killed per month at the Tannery Road slaughterhouse and 15,000 to 16,000 at the KR Market one.

As per the law, no goat or sheep is killed at stalls. The mutton stall owners must have a trade licence from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and have to take the animals to the designated slaughterhouses. They have to pay an entry fee of Rs 10 and a slaughtering fee of Rs 16 for each animal. Now, the BBMP plans to increase the fee to Rs 50 (Rs 40 slaughter fee and Rs 10 entry fee). The civic body is expected to get Rs 10 lakh as revenue from the contractor who maintains the slaughterhouse on Tannery Road and Rs 2.50 lakh from KR Market one per year.

Animal activists are demanding that authorities ensure stunning facilities at all slaughterhouses so that pain animals experience is reduced.

The Karnataka Government Order signed by Under Secretary of Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department on behalf of the Governor dated July 9, 2019, advised the state government or any local authority of other persons in design and maintenance of slaughterhouses with the provision of humane methods of slaughter, to alleviate unnecessary pain or suffering in pre-slaughter stages as far as possible.

"The Karnataka Animal Welfare Board is violating the law by not implementing mandatory stunning of animals before slaughter as mandated in the government order," said Arun Prasad, an animal activist.

When informed, Principal Secretary for Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences Salma Fahim said the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences has nothing to do with slaughterhouses. "We do not maintain the slaughterhouses. It is the responsibility of local bodies," said Salma Fahim.

Dr Manjunath S Palegar, Director of Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services agreed. "The BBMP has to provide the stunning facilities at the slaughterhouses," said Dr Palegar.

Sujaya Jagadish, a member of SPCA, said that animal husbandry and veterinary services authorities have become apathetic towards animals' issues. "The authorities have shown no interest in issuing directions to the authorities concerned to do that," said Jagadish.

BBMP Animal Husbandry Department Joint Director Dr Ravikumar explained why the BBMP is not able to facilitate stunning facilities at slaughterhouses. "There is a stay order by the honourable court to maintain the status quo at the two slaughterhouses. There is a stay order against the construction of a modern slaughterhouse near Harohalli," said Dr Ravikumar.

Suspected food poisoning: 1 dead, 15 hospitalised

A woman named Siddagangamma, 60, lost her life, while 150 others were hospitalised due to suspected food poisoning in Hoskote.

According to the sources, the prasad given at a local Hanuman temple could have caused the food poisoning. Numerous devotees had come to the temple and ate the prasad, consisting of dishes like puliyogare, payasa, and laddoo, on Saturday.

Later many people including the woman, experienced symptoms such as dysentery and vomiting, leading to their hospitalisation. Despite medical attention, her condition deteriorated, resulting in her losing her life. Meanwhile, others affected are undergoing treatment, with some in critical condition, said the police.

According to the sources, the woman had not gone to the temple. Her husband had visited three temples and got the food for her.

The health officials who visited the hospital where the others are admitted said that many have been discharged after a check-up and they are still investigating what could have caused the poisoning.

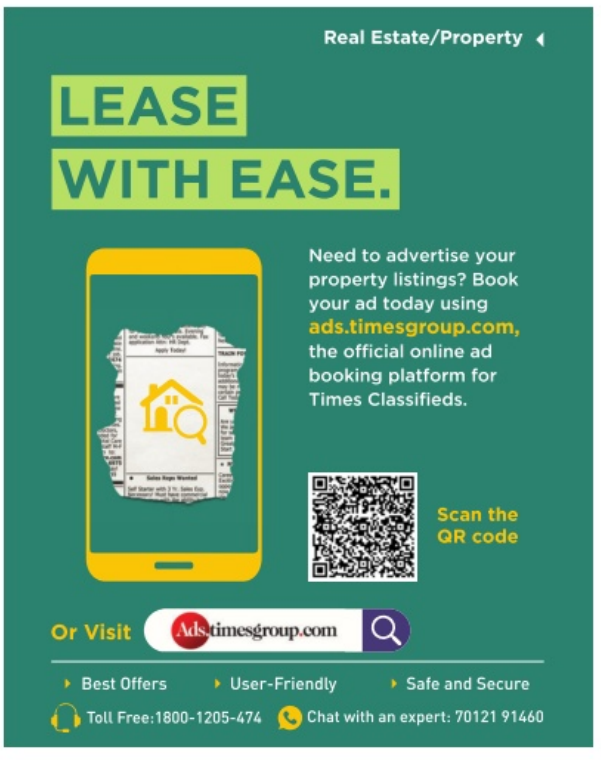
"We have information that about 70 people have been admitted to different hospitals. The health department has identified five hospitals in which maximum patients have been admitted. Looking at the situation, in one of the hospitals, they have dedicated an entire floor to treat ICU patients. Patients suspect that the prasad they ate at the temple on Saturday must have led to alleged food poisoning. But there were also others who did not eat the prasad and yet developed dysentery and vomiting. So it needs to be verified," a police officer said.

"We have started recording statements of these patients. So far we have not registered any complaint. Our investigation is in the initial stage. We are awaiting a complaint from the health department and the food safety officer. Based on the statements and their complaints, we will soon be registering a case and taking necessary action," he added. **-BMB & Agencies**

Work-in-progress building collapses, 2 feared trapped

Two workers are feared to be trapped after an under-construction building collapsed in Bengaluru, police said on Monday.

According to officials, the cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained. Rescue workers and earth-movers were at the site of the mishap. Further details are awaited.



34 cases of JN.1 in K'taka

20 cases of variant in Bengaluru; 3 deaths by covid reported in state

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Approximately 34 cases of the JN.1 sub-variant have been identified in the state. The genome sequencing results of 60 samples are available to date out of the 192 samples submitted. Results for the remaining positive cases are expected by Wednesday. Health officials provided a breakdown of the 34 JN.1 cases in the state, stating, "Out of 34 JN.1 cases in the state, the breakup is as follows: 20 in Bengaluru city, four in Mysuru, three in Mandya, and one case each from Ramanagara, Bengaluru Rural, Kodagu, and Chamaraja Nagara. Three deaths have been reported, one each from the South Zone in Bengaluru, West Zone in Bengaluru, and Ramanagara district. Therefore, the total stands at 31 cases plus three deaths."

It is essential to note that both the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, currently classify JN.1 as a Variant of Interest (VoI) and not a Variant of Concern (VoC). The officials emphasised, "Hence, imposing restrictions and creating unnecessary panic among the public are not advised. Circulars regarding daily testing targets, hospital preparedness, and advisory to the general public about the compliance of Covid Appropriate Behaviour have been issued. Furthermore, samples of Covid-19 positive cases were tested for the newly reported Omicron variant of Covid-19, i.e., JN.1 at NIV, Pune & NCBS, Bengaluru."

Observe precautions

Meanwhile, officials highlighted that in light of the current COVID-19 scenario in the state, certain precautions need to be observed by the general public. They recommended that the elderly (60 years and above), those with comorbidities (especially with kidney, heart, liver ailments, etc.), pregnant women, and lactating mothers avoid visiting closed, poorly ventilated spaces and crowded areas. When outdoors, they should wear face masks covering the nose and mouth. Additionally, safe celebrations during year-end festivities and New Year celebrations should adhere to Covid Appropriate Behavior (CAB) of social distancing, face masking, hand-sanitization, and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette.

School students wearing masks in precaution against covid visit the Vidhana Soudha, on Thursday

The health minister, Dinesh Gundu Rao, mentioned that the state government's Cabinet subcommittee will meet on December 26 to discuss the recommendations made by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on further measures to manage the COVID-19 situation in the state. He reassured that there will be no immediate imposition of restrictions, emphasizing the need for caution and precaution. He stated, "As we increase COVID tests, cases will increase. Our TAC met yesterday and has held discussions; the cabinet sub-committee meeting tomorrow will look into their suggestions or recommendations and decide on what further measures need to be taken. There are no restrictions as of now on New Year celebration and other activities. Nowhere in the country or world there is any restriction, despite JN.1 subvariant prevalent everywhere. There are no such guidelines from the central government or the World Health Organisation."

> **Three deaths have been reported, one each from South Zone in Bengaluru, West Zone and Ramanagara district**
>
> –Health official

IN BRIEF

'63 cases of covid sub-variant in India'

Sixty-three cases of covid-19 sub-variant JN.1 were reported in the country till Sunday, including 34 detected in Goa, official sources said on Monday.

Nine cases have been detected from Maharashtra, eight from Karnataka, six from Kerala, four from Tamil Nadu and two from Telangana, they added.

NITI Aayog member (Health) Dr VK Paul said last week that the scientific community in India is closely investigating the new Covid sub-variant and stressed the need for states to ramp up testing and strengthen their surveillance systems.

Even though the number of cases is rising and the JN.1 subvariant has been detected in the country, there is no cause of immediate concern as 92 per cent of those infected are opting for home-based treatment, indicating a mild illness, officials had said.

There is also no increase in hospitalisation rates and covid-19 is an incidental finding in those hospitalised due to other medical conditions, they had said.

In a letter to the states and Union territories last week, Union Health Secretary Sudhansh Pant underlined the critical COVID-19 control-and-management strategies considering the upcoming festive season and advised them to put in place the requisite public health measures to minimise the risk of increase in the transmission of the disease.

The states have been urged to ensure effective compliance of the detailed operational guidelines for a revised Covid surveillance strategy shared by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. **PTI**

Expert view on mass testing amid spike in cases

Despite Centre's advisory amid a spike in covid-19 cases in India, testing rate in states remain low

Experts on Monday said that while mass testing may not be practical looking at the logistics, it may help understand the exact cause of the respiratory illnesses currently seen across the country.

According to Union Health Ministry data, India recorded a single-day rise of 628 new Covid-19 cases while the active caseload jumped to 4,054. The total fatalities were recorded at 5,33,334 with one new death reported from Kerala in the previous 24 hours, the data updated at 8 a.m. showed.

As per a recent survey conducted by LocalCircles, only 1 in 9 Indians with Covid symptoms are taking a RT-PCR test.

It noted that due to this India runs the risk of late identification of JN.1 variant in communities which can be an issue if it is causing severe disease in some people.

"Testing is not commonly done at all in India, because of many reasons. One, the public appears to think that the pandemic has gone away completely and will not come back. A good percentage of doctors also appear to believe that as well," Dr Rajeev Jayadevan, co-chairman of the National Indian Medical Association Covid Task Force, told IANS.

"Secondly, Covid is no longer perceived as a threat as it used to be after vaccination covered most of the country, the severity of the disease came down significantly," he added.

Moreover, the variants have changed to Omicron, hence the death rate has dropped. Therefore, people feel that testing might not make a difference in the treatment or the outcome.

> **Mass testing not practical, people at risk can get tested; JN.1 not particularly concerning, say docs**

In addition, even as many patients come in with symptoms of cold and fever to hospitals, it is impractical to send everybody for a Covid test besides the expense, the doctor said.

"Yet the downside of not testing is that we will not know the exact cause of the respiratory illnesses that are happening. The knowledge of which can help us customise treatment and prevention protocols. Without testing, we are effectively flying blind," Dr. Jayadevan said.

The sudden surge in Covid cases in the country is believed to be due to JN.1, from the lineage of the Omicron variant of Covid. It is a descendent lineage of BA.2.86, with the earliest sample collected on August 25, 2023.

"Currently globally, JN.1 is only a variant of interest, which means it is not of interest to the common people. In other words, it is not a risk to common people. And even if common people get it, they will recover within three to four days. And that's the reason that mass testing is not required," said Dr Ishwar Gilada, Consultant in Infectious Diseases Unison Medicare and Research Centre, Mumbai.

Dr Manoj Goel, Director, Pulmonology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute noted that "mass testing is not a practical solution" for all.

He told IANS that "a vulnerable set of people like those above the age of 60 or are patients with diabetes, cancer, heart, or prevailing lung issues, experience cough, cold or fever then they must definitely get tested". **—IANS**

Cool, cool Ooty

Unusual chill at popular hill station this year has proven to be magnet for tourists

Ooty, widely recognised as one of the most popular hill stations near Bengaluru, typically attracts visitors during the summer for its cool weather. However, this year, a number of people are heading to Ooty due to the unusual cold weather it is experiencing. In fact, certain areas in the Nilgiris district are recording temperatures close to freezing point.

As reported by The Times of India, Thalaikundha village in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris district recorded a minimum temperature of 0°C on Sunday. The severe cold in this elevated region prompted residents, unaccustomed to such low temperatures, to seek refuge indoors, disrupting normal life. Facing the harsh chill, locals mostly remained indoors. In contrast, Ooty, a prominent hill station in South India, recorded a minimum temperature of 7.5 degrees Celsius. The extensive grasslands in the Nilgiris district resembled a wonderland, adorned with fresh dewdrops, commonly referred to as white frost, covering the lush green grass. White frost was observed in various areas of the well-known hill station, including Ooty Nagar, Thalikunda, HPF, Kanthal, and Fingerpost. Parked vehicles were coated with up to an inch of snow, causing residents difficulties in starting their cars. Local meteorological officials noted notable fluctuations in both day and night temperatures over the past few weeks, with daytime temperatures consistently exceeding 25 degrees Celsius.

Safe journey

Ooty is among the most sought-after hill stations for tourists from Bengaluru. Being one of the nearest hill stations to the IT capital (approximately 270 km away), many flock to the queen of hill stations regularly. However, the winding roads of Ooty pose a significant threat. There are three main routes from Bengaluru to Ooty, with the Bandipur-Masinagudi and Ooty route being the shortest and most preferred, followed by Bandipur-Gudalur-Ooty and Hosur-Mettupalayam-Coonoor and Ooty, which is the longest and least preferred. The challenging roads leading to the hill station, perched at an altitude of 2210 meters above mean sea level, have seen an increase in accidents. In response, the Tamil Nadu police have designated the Masinagudi road as one-way and prohibited vehicles from Ooty to Masinagudi for tourists. Vehicles must use the Gudalur road only during the return journey. However, leaving Ooty early is advisable, as the Bandipur gate closes at 9 pm, and ongoing road widening works on the Gudalur road result in frequent traffic jams.

The Tamil Nadu police highlight the Masinagudi route as one of the most dangerous in the country, featuring 36 hairpin bends and a narrow road, contributing to recent accidents. Tourists often struggle to navigate the hairpin bends, leading to fatal incidents. The one-way system is in place for tourists descending from Ooty to take the Gudalur route. However, even the Gudalur road poses risks, as visible overtaking trends may lead to fatal accidents. Due to hotel booking practices, where most operate on a 12 pm-12 pm basis, tourists often rush to leave Ooty by afternoon, extending their travel time to Bandipur via the Gudalur road. In their haste to cross Bandipur by 9 pm, tourists may resort to speeding, resulting in accidents."

Cess mess

Meanwhile, travelers are experiencing delays at the entrance of Bandipur as the forest department is collecting Rs 20 as a 'green cess.' Despite the seemingly reasonable amount, the collection of this green cess is causing lengthy traffic jams, testing the patience of vehicle users. Initially imposed for non-KA vehicles heading towards Wayanad from the Gundlupet side, the forest department recently extended the green cess to all vehicles crossing Bandipur. Cars and other LCVs are charged Rs 20, while heavy vehicles Rs 30. Tourists say as this is a two-lane road, some vehicles try to overtake, causing chaos at the cess collection point. It has become an obstacle, especially in the evenings when people want to exit the forest quickly.

Watch out for new tiger safari zone in Karnataka

Nagarhole and Bandipur in Karnataka are renowned all over the country and across the world among wildlife enthusiasts as exceptional sanctuaries. Now the state is set to replicate that success with the introduction of a novel tiger safari zone in the Old Mysore region, in Chamarajanagar, the southernmost district. With this, Karnataka is hoping to boost the economy of the region and give its tourism landscape a major revamp.

The safari is currently in the pilot stage.

Wildlife in the area includes tigers, leopards, Indian hare, sambar and spotted deer, Indian gaur and a large variety of avian species. The route also runs along the elephant corridor, making encounters with wild elephants a possibility.

According to reports, the safari will start in the PG Palya Range from Lokkanahalli and stretch 18 kilometres to the wildlife division with the Male Mahadeshwara Hills, and will take wildlife lovers through dense jungle and allow them to appreciate the diverse wildlife in the area. The route is also known to host a number of significant structures from the Stone Age including an anti-poaching camp and burial grounds, making this safari a draw for history buffs as well.

The tiger safari plan is part of a proposed Kollegal tourist circuit that will allow visitors to explore a variety of attractions in a single day, including the Bharachukki Falls (above), Gundal Dam and the Dhondenling Tibetan camp.

— by Femina Travel

Govt will take decision on hijab after looking into issue in detail: Karnataka Home Minister

With the debate on the hijab issue continuously heating with each passing day, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara has said that the government will take a decision after looking into the matter deeply.

"We have not made any orders regarding hijab. CM Siddaramaiah himself said that even if it is done, we will check it. The government will take a decision after looking into it deeply," G Parameshwara told ANI.

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader KT Rama Rao slammed the Congress-led Karnataka government on Sunday, saying that the Siddaramaiah government has not lifted the ban on hijab yet in the state and they are still thinking about it.

"They have not lifted the ban on hijab yet and the CM has said that they are thinking about it. People are seeing the behaviour of Congress

"They have not lifted the ban on hijab yet and the CM has said that they are thinking about it. People are seeing the behaviour of Congress--what they say before coming to power and how they change after getting power," KTR said.

The debate on hijab issue again rose to prominence after Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced in a public meeting that his government will lift the ban on hijab imposed by the previous BJP government in the state.

"We are thinking of withdrawing the decision (of hijab ban). We will discuss it. I have said this in response to a question. We have not done it yet," the Chief Minister said.

Former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai accused current CM Siddaramaiah of hiding the failures of his government as well as raising the issue for only political gains.

He told reporters here on Saturday that the hijab was not banned all over the state but not allowed where there was a dress code. Muslim women are permitted to wear the hijab everywhere.

"When the hijab is not banned, where is the question of lifting the ban," he questioned.

The previous BJP government in the State had imposed a hijab ban on students in educational institutions.

The matter reached the Karnataka High Court, which also upheld the ban imposed by the then-BJP government. In this regard, the Supreme Court delivered a split verdict, leading to the Karnataka High Court verdict being upheld. **ANI**

Twelve flights diverted due to poor visibility at Hyderabad Airport

Poor visibility at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad on Monday led to diversion of at least a dozen flights.

Officials said poor visibility due to dense fog affected the flight operations.

The flights were diverted to Bengalauru, Nagpur and other airports. Flights from Muscat, Doha, Dammam and Riyadh were among the flights diverted.

Flight WY235 Muscat-Hyderabad of Oman Air was diverted to Bengaluru. IndiGo's 6E5012 Mumbai-Hyderabad diverted to Nagpur. 6E 495 Chennai-Hyderabad was also diverted to Nagpur.

Vistara's UK 873 flight from Mumbai was sent back to Mumbai. 6E 1318 Doha-Hyderabad flight was diverted to Nagpur.

UK 897 Bengaluru-Hyderabad was diverted back to Bengaluru. Similarly, 6E 744 flight from Goa was also diverted to Bengaluru.

Flight 6E 867 from Chandigarh was diverted to Vijayawada. 6E 086 from Dammam was diverted to Nagpur. 6E 484 Bengaluru-Hyderabad was diverted to Vijayawada.

Flight I5 1576 flight of Air India Express was sent back to Bengaluru. 6E 1493 from Riyadh was diverted to Bengaluru. **IANS**

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Santosh Naik S/o Datta Kamayya Naik R/o No.31, Kamadhenu MMG layout, RR nagar, Ramakrishna Nagar, Mysuru 570022 have changed my name to Santosh Datta Naik, Affidavit Dt.23/12/2023 notary Harisha G, B'luru, my present camp at Bengaluru

I, Manjunatha M S/o Muthaiah R/o Renuka Nilaya, 1st Cross B H Road, Gajanana Nagara, Bhimasandra, Tumkur, Karnataka-572107, have changed my minor daughter's name about 7 years, from Abhignya M to Sai Abhignya M

I, MOHAMMED HABEEB SHABNUM W/o Mohammed Habeeb R/at No.9, 2nd Cross, JJR Nagar, Bengaluru- 560018 have changed my name to SHABNUM vide affidavit dated: 12/12/2023 Before Notary Deepa.M Bangalore.

I Srinivas Talnikar S/O, Avinashbhai R/o Sy No. 109a, 101, Sri Ram Orchid, Chandra Layout, Marathahalli, Bengaluru, Pin:560037, Karnataka, India have changed my name to Srinivas Avinash Talnikar.

I Archna Singh W/O, Sandip Kumar Singh R/o Flat N0-13168,tower-13,prestige Shantiniketan, Whitefield Main Road, whitefield, hoodi, bengaluru-560048 have changed my name to Archana Singh.

I,SUGUNA R/o No-3228 Flat-301,VHBC Society ltd 4th phase girinagar,Bsk 3rd stage B'lore-560085 have changed my name to Suguna Shetty vide affidavit dated 22.12.2023 swarn before notary S.R.Thulasikrishna

I, Vicky Kumar Jagadish Jain S/o, Jagadish Gogad R/o Ma-305, Mulberry Tower, Parkwest Binnypet Bengaluru- 560023 have changed my name to Vicky Kumar Jain for all purposes.

OBITUARY

SAD DEMISE

SAD DEMISE

Mrs. Savithri Sankar Iyar
19/02/1932 to 25/12/2023

It is with great sadness that we announce the demise of Mrs.Savithri Sankaraiyer , loving mother and grandmother of her grandchildren. We love you and will always miss your presence. You have taught us to never give up and live life to the fullest.

With Love
Ramakrishnan S and family
Balasubramaniam TA and family

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Trial pendency in Bengaluru courts at 84.9%

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"In the city civil court there are five courts that are vacant and the same goes for magistrate court where two courts are vacant with no judge being appointed to the court. Despite the government deciding to increase the number of judges, it's hard to overlook the current vacancies in the court. The slow judicial process keeps the courts vacant for 2-3 months sometimes more than that which leads to a constant delay in the matter," she explained.

She added that the government has recently made a provision to increase the number of magistrates in the city. Recently, a panel led by Supreme Court Chief Justice DY Chandrachud issued directives regarding ongoing judicial vacancies in Karnataka.

According to a report by SC Observer, in Karnataka, court-appointed amicus curiae Gaurav Agarwal apprised the bench of the government's timelines for filling the vacancies, highlighting a broader concern. He emphasised the delay in lower judiciary infrastructure projects, citing instances where administrative sanctions for three courts were pending. Additionally, construction for two courts was underway, but completion hinged on pending tasks like building compound walls. Land transfers for courtroom construction were also awaiting government approval, he told the bench.

BBMP has some planting to do

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The BBMP had a plan to have a website 'Vruksha Rakshaka' to monitor the status and health of tree saplings and the students who adopted those trees for three years and so on. Some people are of the view that the website would be a waste of money as the BBMP is not able to make best use of saplings brought from its own nurseries.

"These saplings have been left here for the past two-and-half years. Some of these saplings have grown up to eight feet high. They need to be planted somewhere but it is not done. Haven't they accounted for the expenses of the same? The BBMP is talking about sapling care. But the reality is different," said Selwyn Mascarenhas, a BMTC commuter.

Balaji Raghotham, an environmentalist, said it is indeed miserable to see saplings abandoned at the BBMP premises.

"I come across many abandoned saplings on Old Madras Road and other areas. These saplings are nurtured at the BBMP nurseries with utmost care and love. I feel disgusted at the apathy of the authorities and public towards saplings. Many saplings planted along Old Madras Road especially opposite the Baiyappanahalli police station are wilted due to lack of care and water," said Rathogham.

Dr AN Yellappa Reddy, former secretary (forests), Karnataka government, told BM that keeping saplings idle or abandoned for quite a long time will have an adverse impact on their growth. He said the BBMP has to take initiative to shift the saplings to designated places either for planting or for nurture and care (nursery).

"I want the BBMP authorities to recover the expenses of saplings from the salary of the BBMP officer responsible for abandoning them," Reddy demanded.

Meanwhile, BBMP deputy forest range officer (Mahadevapura) Sudarshan Reddy said he would inform the officer concerned to shift the saplings to the nursery.

HEALTH TIP: Yoghurt is loaded with calcium, potassium, selenium and phosphorus

Leafy greens, including kale, spinach, and Swiss chard, are nutritional powerhouses that can fortify your body against pollution

PERIOD OF PAIN

What to eat and avoid if you have cramping during menstruation

Painful periods are common. More than half of people who menstruate have some pain for up to three days a month, typically throbbing or cramping in the lower abdomen.

Digestive changes – such as vomiting, gas, bloating, diarrhoea and a "bubbling gut" – are also common around the time of menstruation.

There are many treatments for period pain (known medically as dysmenorrhoea). Not all these treatments are well-tolerated or work for everyone.

We're learning more about food's role in influencing inflammation in our body. So, could eating or avoiding certain foods help with painful periods? Here's what we know based on high-quality research.

Foods that may relieve period pain or cramps

Foods containing omega-3 fatty acids

Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids include chia seeds, walnuts, flaxseeds, salmon, herring, sardines, mackerel, oysters and edamame beans. Omega-3 fatty acids are naturally present in oils including fish, cod liver, algal, krill, flaxseed (linseed), soybean and canola oils.

Omega-3 fatty acids affect how our cells function and the signalling pathways associated with inflammation and pain.

Earlier this year, researchers published a meta-analysis where they combined and analysed all data available on the impact of omega-3 fatty acids on period pain. They found diets high in omega-3 fatty acids (including supplements of 300-1,800 milligrams a day) over two to three months may reduce pain, and pain medication use, in people with painful periods.

Foods high in vitamin D

Foods high in vitamin D include trout, salmon, tuna and mackerel, as well as fish liver oils. Small amounts are also found in beef liver, egg yolk and cheese. Mushrooms contain varying levels of vitamin D, and you can boost this by exposing them to direct midday sunlight for 15-120 minutes.

The body can make vitamin D when it gets sunlight exposure and you can also get vitamin D from supplements.

Vitamin D may help reduce the factors that cause inflammation in the uterus. This includes levels of hormone-like molecules called prostaglandins.

A 2023 meta-analysis showed women who received weekly doses of vitamin D greater than 50,000 IU (or international units) had relief from period pain, regardless of how long and how often women took the vitamin.

Foods high in vitamin E

Foods rich in vitamin E include seeds (particularly sunflower seeds), nuts (particularly almonds, hazelnuts and peanuts) and spinach, broccoli, kiwifruit, mango and tomato.

There is some evidence vitamin E supplements reduce period pain. In a well-conducted trial run over the course of four periods, women took vitamin E supplements (90 milligrams, twice a day) for five days, beginning two days before the expected start of the period. This significantly reduced the severity and duration of period pain.

Foods that may worsen period pain or cramps

Highly processed foods

Highly processed foods include energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods such as takeaways, chips, biscuits, doughnuts, processed meats and soft drinks.

Research findings on the impact of a diet high in processed foods on period pain vary. A 2022 review found sugar consumption had little association with painful periods.

However, some observational studies (which do not involve an intervention) suggest women who eat more processed foods may have more intense period pain. For example, a 2009 study found adolescent females who ate fast or processed foods for two days or more a week reported more period pain compared with those who did not. Therefore, eating less processed food may be something to consider.

Caffeine

Foods high in caffeine include coffee, energy drinks and some processed energy bars. Caffeine intake is associated with menstrual pain.

Although we don't know the precise underlying mechanism, researchers think caffeine may narrow blood vessels, which limits blood flow, leading to stronger cramps.

Alcohol

Drinking alcohol is not a recognised risk factor for painful periods. However, chronic heavy alcohol use reduces levels of magnesium in the blood. Magnesium is an important factor in relaxing muscles and supporting blood flow.

A healthy, balanced diet is your best best

Having a healthy, balanced diet is one of the best ways we can support our own health and prevent future chronic conditions. This can help reduce inflammation in our bodies, thought to be the main way diet can help people with painful periods.

If you are looking for tailored dietary advice or a menstrual health meal plan, speak with an accredited practising dietitian.

It's important to stress, however, that diet alone cannot treat all forms of menstrual pain. So if you are concerned about your painful periods, check in with your GP who can discuss your options.

(By Lauren Ball and Pui Ting Wong, The University of Queensland and Emily Burch, Southern Cross University, The Conversation)

All you need to know about...

IBS care

Different approaches

Currently, there is no cure for irritable bowel syndrome. The treatment for IBS usually includes self-care and counseling is used as part of the treatment. Some people can manage their symptoms by managing their diet, lifestyle, and stress while others will need medication.

Lifestyle changes

Since irritable bowel syndrome doesn't have any cure, it can be managed by a series of lifestyle changes. These lifestyle changes or home remedies include:

1. Regular Exercise

The symptoms of IBS is often associated with food and eating. One of the ways in which you can manage IBS is by regular exercise. Exercise can help with IBS. For starters, cardiovascular activity can aid digestion. As a result, symptoms such as constipation and bloating may be alleviated. Second, exercise is a well-known stress reliever, and stress management is critical for IBS patients.

2. Stay Hydrated

Drinking enough water is beneficial to your general health, but it can also aid digestion. Constipation can be caused or exacerbated by dehydration. Water also makes it easier for your stools to pass and helps relieve IBS.

4. Therapy

Managing stress is essential for controlling IBS. In such cases seeking therapy will help you reduce stress or teach you how to detect when your thoughts are spinning and how to reframe thinking to minimise stress.

5. Diet

For a few people, changes in dietary habits[3] can work wonders in managing IBS. Patients suffering from IBS are usually recommended the low FODMAP diet by doctors. FODMAP is a type of carbohydrate that can be present in certain meals.

—Femina

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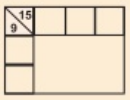
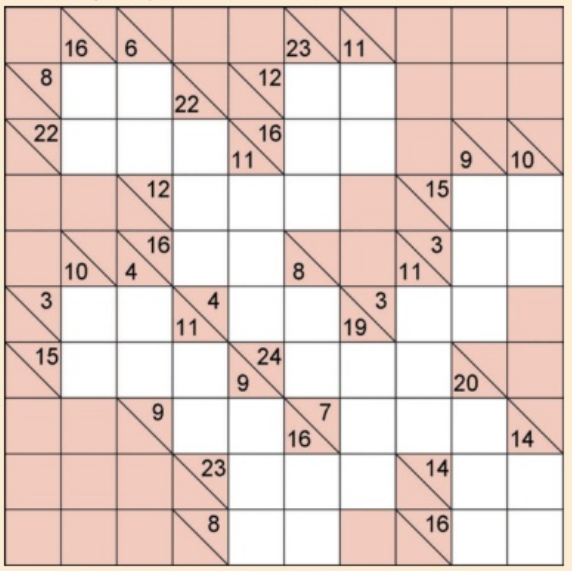
Kakuro

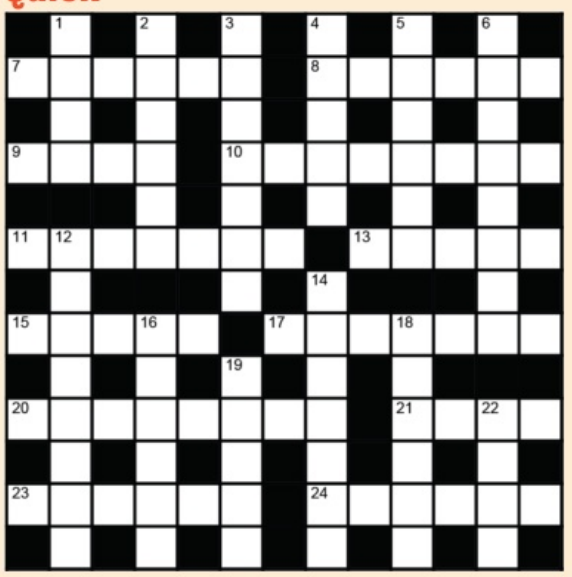
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Conceptualize (6)
8 Responds to a stimulus (6)
9 A small swelling (4)
10 Tedious, boring (8)
11 Sweetheart (7)
13 Male relative (5)
15 National park home to tigers, panthers and elephants (5)
17 To send away (7)
20 Drive out evil spirits (8)
21 Not all (4)
23 Six-legged creature? (6)
24 Getting one's goat (6)

DOWN

1 Without purpose (4)
2 Fireplace shelf (6)
3 Defeating, getting the better of (7)
4 Ten million, in our country ? (5)
5 Sherlock Holmes' buddy (6)
6 Trips (8)
12 Acquiring, appropriating or confiscating (8)
14 Gun (7)
16 Colts and stallions (6)
18 Bodily strength (6)
19 From side to side (5)
22 Make coins (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: P EQUALS G

UL XAL QLTLA RW OLBLQHLN-LRR XPXJQRZ REBBLAJQP XR UKLQ UL NWTL.

Linemaro

This time next year, let's be laughing together

Mindchow

A life spent making mistakes is more honourable and more useful than a life spent doing nothing

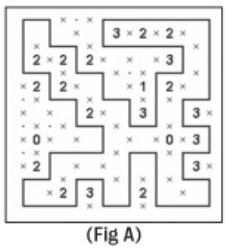
Joke of the day

I went to buy a candle-holder but the store didn't have one. So I got a cake

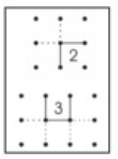
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

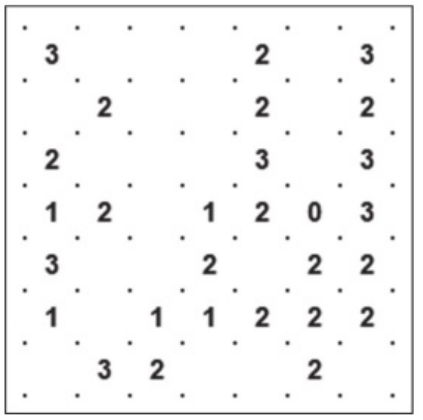


(Fig B) Not Allowed

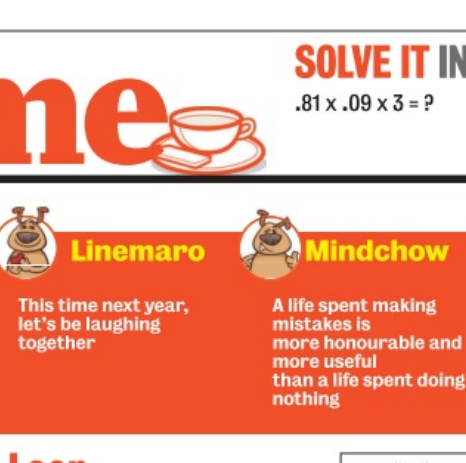
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

ACROSS

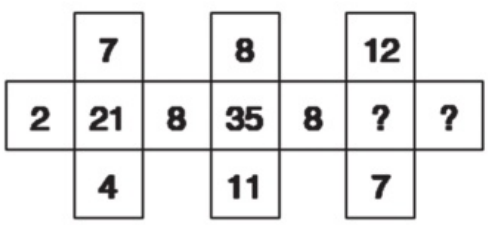
1 A past; 6 Lieus;
7 Tills; 8 A a get;
9 It Hun

DOWN

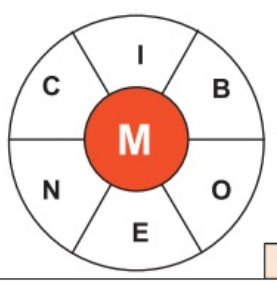
1 Pauli; 2 In Gal;
3 Hales; 4 Tut it;
5 Tessa

Mensapuzzle

What numbers should replace the question marks?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

06 Average; 07 Good; 09 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		1	8					
8			2	1				3
				7	5	9		8
4		5					8	
	6		1		2		5	
	9					4		6
5		2	6	9				
9				8	1			7
					3	1		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 7

3 8 9 9

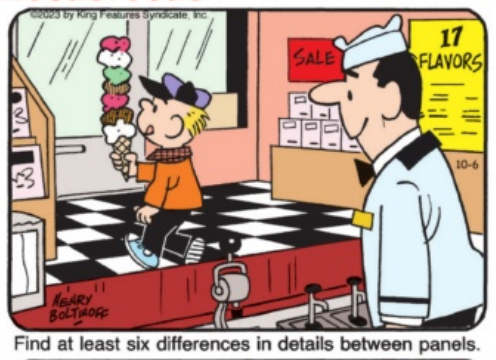
Medium = 1

2 2 5 7

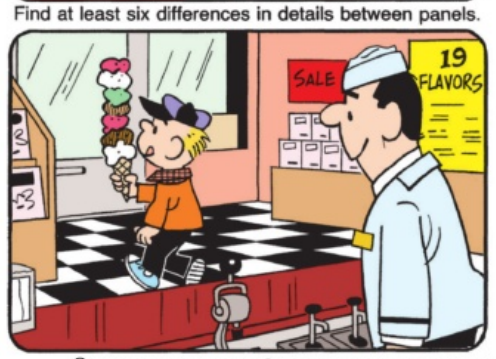
Hard = 3

2 4 5 3

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



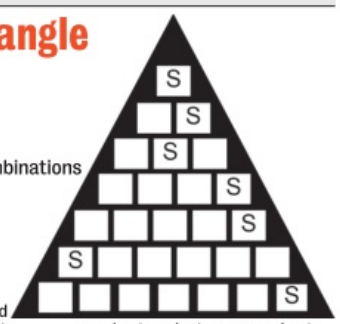
Differences: 1. Nose is smaller. 2. Cap is different. 3. Number of flavours is different. 4. Napkin holder is smaller. 5. Collar is different. 6. Bow tie is missing.

Riddler

By using each set of letters below, create a compound word out of two separate words. Each of the separate words has a letter in common and that letter is given in the correct position for each word. Use the letters provided only once. The compound word may begin with either of the two separate words.

Alpha triangle

1 Sulphur symbol
2 Good _ it gets
3 Deadly snake
4 Criticises
5 Neck parts
6 Fashioned, in combinations
7 Takes place



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

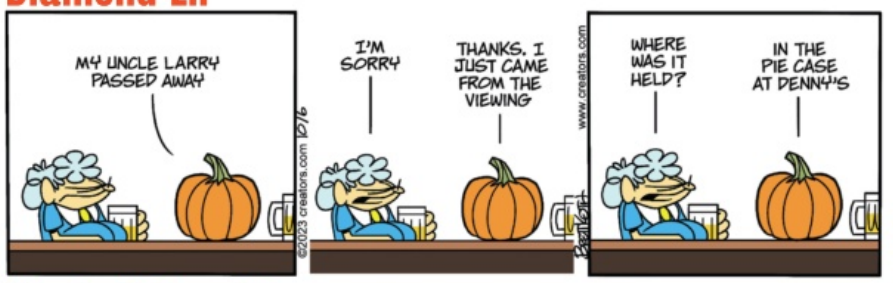
Redeye by Mel Casson

NOTHING I DO SEEMS TO GO RIGHT LATELY. I'M THINKING OF GIVING UP THIS MEDICINE-MAN BUSINESS
TELL ME ABOUT IT SOME OTHER TIME! RIGHT NOW, GET BUSY AND CURE MY COLD!
SEE WHAT I MEAN?

Bizarrotrip

We're going to take a break, but stick around. We'll be back with another set in seventeen years.
Wayne & 2 Pirates 10-6-23
The CICADAS
Dist. by King Features BIZARRO.COM
©2023 BIZARRO STUDIOS

Diamond Lil

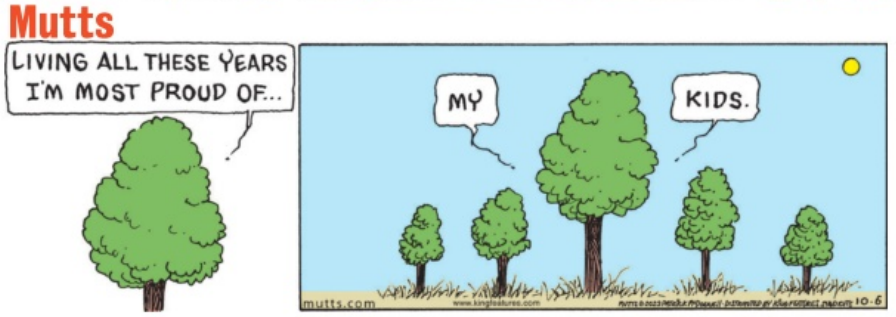

MY UNCLE LARRY PASSED AWAY
I'M SORRY
THANKS. I JUST CAME FROM THE VIEWING
WHERE WAS IT HELD?
IN THE PIE CASE AT DENNY'S
©2023 creators.com 10/16
www.creators.com

Hart of the city

WORKING THE RUNWAY! SLAYING THE RUNWAY!
WOO!
CLAP
CLAP
IT'S A LOT.
IT'S PERFECT.
OKAY, MAYBE DRAG STORYTIME ISN'T JUST FOR BABIES.
EXACTLY! BABIES OF ALL AGES CAN BE FIERCE.
I LOVE BEING A FIERCE 14-YEAR-OLD BABY.

Crankshaft

Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may feel negative vibrations around you, which may make you unhappy. You are advised to avoid making investments in worthless assets. You may also notice that friends and people around you may not be supportive today. It is advised not to expect more from anyone in terms of help; otherwise, it may make you nervous. It is advised to make independent decisions today.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may have confidence which may reflect in your way of working. You are in a winning position in terms of opponents and enemies. You may have a good focus on your goals. Health issues may be good. In domestic life, try to avoid unnecessary arguments as they may affect your domestic harmony.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You may be happy due to blessings from an auspicious planetary combination. You may have some sort of positive energy which may enhance your prestige among people around you. You may spend your time studying intellectual stuff and plan for higher studies.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may be busy with your family and friends. You may plan to renovate your house or bring some creative stuff to maintain your social status, which may increase your prestige. You may expect an increase in your fixed assets.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may not be able to present yourself practically. You may have a dull feeling, which may give you a lack of confidence. So, you need to follow your intuition while making decisions regarding investments. People around you may not be cooperative in terms of routine work. You are advised to be careful in eating unhealthy food to avoid stomach issues.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you may be blessed by your destiny, and your postponed projects may start now with the help of elders' blessings. Messy situations are now under control, which may speed up your projects. Disputes between family members may likely be resolved, increasing domestic harmony. Your creativity may improve now in artefacts, and you may be attracted by glamour.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today is a positive day in terms of gains. You may get results with less effort. Your losses may convert into profits with the help of your wisdom. You may plan for higher studies to groom your career. You may donate some amount to a religious place or charity. Some investment in intellectual assets may be possible. Students may do better.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may feel happy, and your health-related issues may be cured. Chronic diseases may be cured. You are advised to avoid rush driving and hurry. You are advised to avoid conflicts with business partners. You may make some important decisions in terms of business. Investments in business or work are advised to be postponed.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, your moon is not in a good position, and you may feel dull with potential health issues. You may face losses in this period. It is advised not to invest in risky assets. Your gains may likely convert into losses. You should stop investing in worthless objects. You should avoid being involved in controversies, as it may negatively impact you.

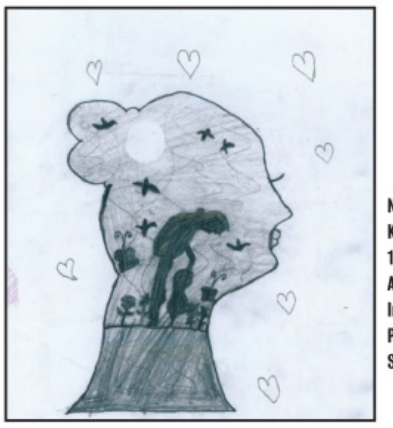
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you are blessed by the moon, and your destiny is with you. Your postponed projects are likely to start now. You may have elders' blessings, which may help you come out of messy situations, boosting the speed of your work. Domestic harmony may make you happy after resolving some disputes between family members.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today is a good day, and you are enthusiastic. With good focus, you may perform well in business and work. Your boss may be supportive, and you may get some new responsibilities in terms of promotion. There may be a visit to a religious place. It is advised to avoid arrogance in your love life.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today you are blessed by the moon. Love would be in the air in terms of personal life. Singles may find a suitable match. You may do better in terms of professional life. Your friends and subordinate staff may likely support you.

KIDZONE

Krisha Mahesh, 10 years, Little Flower Public School



Nithyashree KL, 13 years, Asian International Public School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= 81/9 x 3
= 9 x 3 = 27

RIDDLER
1. Fingertip,
2. Somehow,
3. Chestnut,
4. Needlepoint

BULL'S EYE
come, mien, mince, mine, omen

FAST FIVE

P	A	S	T	A
I	L	E	U	S
L	I	L	T	S
A	G	A	T	E
U	N	H	I	T

STRIKE OUT

E	A	S	E	L	S	S	E	D	G	E	S			
T	I	L	E	A	D	S	O	K						
L	I	Q	U	I	D	N	O	R	D	I	C			
E	A	R	I	D	E	R	A							
V	E	R	B	H	E	M	N	E	E	R				
S	C	I	O	N	D	B	A	S	I	C				
A	B	O	A	R	D	E	R	R						
P	L	E	A	D	A	W	I	S	E	D				
U	P	I	N	R	O	N	K	N	E	E				
W	D	N	A	B	A	L	O	M						
E	D	I	E	D	E	L	A	I	N	E				
R	A	D	A	C	C	A	N	E						
D	O	C	K	E	R	O	C	C	U	L	T			

QUICK

G	S	H	M	E	T									
I	N	S	E	C	T	R	I	L	I	N	G			
I	S	D	A	C	I									
E	X	O	R	C	I	S	E	S	O	M	E			
E	O	W	R	U										
A	N	S	H	I	D	I	S	M	I	S	S			
N	G	F	E											
D	A	R	L	I	N	G	U	N	C	L	E			
E	I	E	O	B										
C	Y	S	T	T	I	R	E	S	O	M	E			
L	N	S	O	T	U									
I	D	E	A	T	E	R	E	A	C	T	S			
I	M	B	C	W	S									

MENSA PUZZLE
31 and 4: 12 × 7 = 84; 8 + 12 + 7 + 4 = 31.

QUOTE UNCODE
We are never so defenceless against suffering as when we love.

SUDOKU

3	7	1	8	6	9	5	4	2
8	5	9	2	1	4	6	7	3
2	4	6	3	7	5	9	1	8
4	2	5	9	3	6	7	8	1
7	6	8	1	4	2	3	5	9
9	3	4	5	8	1	2	6	7
5	1	2	6	9	7	8	3	4
1	9	3	7	5	8	4	2	6
6	8	7	4	2	3	1	9	5

ALPHA TRIANGLE
5, As, Asp, Pans, Naps, Shapen, Happens.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 – 3 + 9 – 8 = 7
Medium
5 × 2 – 7 – 2 = 1
Hard
5 + 4 – 3 / 2 = 3

LOOP

KAKURO

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Arbaaz, Shura pose with Arhaan— Actor-producer Arbaaz Khan tied the knot with make-up artist Shura Khan on Sunday at his sister Arpita Khan Sharma's residence in Mumbai. The actor's son Arhaan posed with the couple at the ceremony

Birthday message

Actress Rashmika Mandanna wished a 'happiest birthday' to the 'Animal' director Sandeep Reddy Vanga as he turned 42.

Filmmaker Sandeep, who hails from Warangal, had made his screenwriting and directing debut with the 2017 Telugu film 'Arjun Reddy', starring Vijay Deverakonda.

He is currently riding high on the success of his action drama flick 'Animal', which stars Ranbir Kapoor, Anil Kapoor, Bobby Deol, Rashmika, and Tripti Dimri in the lead.

Now, on the occasion of his birthday, the lead actress of 'Animal' -Rashmika has penned a sweet note and shared a smiling picture of the director. The 'Mission Majnu' actress is also seen making her signature heart sign with her hands.

She wrote: "HAPPIEST BIRTHDAY VANGA SIRRERRR... @SANDEEPREDDY. VANGA", followed by a smiley.

'Animal' features Ranbir in a dual role as Ranvijay Singh and Aziz Haque. Senior star Anil Kapoor also plays dual characters of Balbir Singh and Kailash Petkar. Bobby portrays the role of Abrar Haque, while Rashmika plays Geetanjali Iyengar, who is the wife of Ranbir's character.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Rashmika next has 'Pushpa 2: The Rule', 'Rainbow' and 'The Girlfriend'. —Agencies

Hello, baby!

Alia and Ranbir reveal their little one Raha to the world

Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor finally revealed daughter Raha Kapoor's face to the world on the occasion of Christmas. Raha was born on November 6, 2022 and since then, Ranbir and Alia had kept her protected from the world. They wanted to protect Raha's privacy and they also had said that they would show her to the world when they feel ready for that.

On 'Koffee With Karan 8', Alia had said that it would come quite organically when they feel ready. Today, on the occasion of Christmas, when Alia and Ranbir attended the Christmas lunch of the Kapoors, the couple finally revealed Raha to the world. Their beautiful daughter was seen in a white fairy-like outfit with red shoes, matching the Christmas vibe. Meanwhile, Ranbir and Alia made a gorgeous couple. As Raha's face is now seen by everyone, childhood photos of Ranbir and Alia have gone viral on the internet as netizens can't stop talking about who she looks like. But people think she neither looks like Ranbir or Alia. Everyone feels she's got the Kapoor genes and looks a lot like Raj Kapoor and Rishi Kapoor. Some also feel she looks like Kareena Kapoor Khan.

A fan said, "She looks like her great grandfather. Raj Kapoor," while another one said, "Mini Kareena kapoor". A user said, "Eyes are on the Kapoor's. Her nose, ears lips and chubby cheeks all on Alia, resembles her childhood pics. — ETimes

Fans go agog and do what is customary when seeing a baby - comment on who the child looks like

With mom

Khushi Kapoor recently made her debut as an actress ith 'The Archies' directed by Zoya Akhtar.

The makers had a grand premiere night for the movie which was attended by the entire industry so to say! Khushi won hearts as she not only looked stunning at the red carpet of her film's premiere, but because she chose to wear her mother Sridevi's gown on her big night.

Kapoor has finally opened up on why she chose to wear that dress. The newbie told Hindustan Times that she didn't want to make any kind of fashion statement. It was a big day for her and she was nervous and even a week before the premiere, she didn't know what she would wear. However, she wanted to wear something of her mother - a piece of jewelry or a dress. The reason being, Khushi needed some extra support that day. It was a big deal for Khushi and she wanted her mother to be with her in some way. Khushi went through some of her clothes and picked out that gown.

After the premiere night, Janhvi Kapoor had shared photos of Khushi and said that their mother would be so proud of her. — ETimes

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Keeravani's song

Oscar-winning music composer MM Keeravani has sung an emotional song for Rangasamudra. With the song Hathurina Deepa, Keeravani returns to Sandalwood after a gap of two decades. Keeravani has composed music for Kannada movies Alimayya, Swathi, Bhairava, and Jamindaru. "I am very happy to meet Keeravani who is known for simplicity and humility. He invited us with a smile when we met him in Hyderabad and agreed to sing the song within five minutes after the movie's script was narrated to him. Keeravani wrote this lyric in Kannada. He spent half a day with the Rangasamudra team and talked about how he spent his initial days as a music director at a single room in Bengaluru and frequently visited Chamundeshwari Studios near Cunningham Road. He also talked about his friendship with actor Doddanna," said director Rajkumar Aski, adding that Keeravani became emotional when told that late Puneeth Rajkumar was supposed to act in Rangasamudra.

Rajkumar Aski and music director Desi Mohan and lyricist Vagesh Channagiri requested the producer of the movie Hoysala Konanuru to help bring in Keeravani. The team left for Hyderabad after the producer contacted Keeravani.

Three songs of Rangasamudra have already become popular among music lovers.

Director's hat

Hariprana who worked as associate director for 78 Kannada movies is all set to debut as a full-fledged director in Sandalwood with Dandathirtha. The title of the movie was unveiled in a unique way on Saturday at a function held at Kalavidara Sangha. Dandathirtha is being bankrolled by Umesh under the Prana Productions banner. Hariprana has written the script, dialogues and screenplay for this movie apart from handling the megaphone.

"The title conveys the meaning of punishment for crime and prasada offered to devotees who visit temples. The pre-interval part of the movie is based on real life incidents and the post-interval is fiction. The movie will have some scenes replicating string operations conducted by the media in real life," said Hariprana.

The director said the movie will showcase four comedians differently on the silver screen. "The four comedians will play serious characters in the movie. We have prepared a plan for the movie's shooting in Bengaluru and Mysuru from next month," the director said.

Dandathirtha features Avinash aka Junior Darshan, Rajanikanth and others.